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The Lexical Categories of State-Denoting Predicates in Thai

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1. Introduction

Whether Thai has the lexical category of "adjectives," distinct from the category of verbs, has been a highly controversial issue in the grammatical studies of the language. Whereas Sookgasem (1996) holds that Thai has the lexical category of adjectives, Prasithrathsint (2000) claims that the so-called adjectives in Thai are subsumed under the category of verbs because their syntactic behavior is not different from that of verbs.

As an "isolating" language, Thai lacks morphological markings of inflections and conjugations and the copula occurs only with nominal complements. If we examine Thai word classes in terms of the criteria that are standardly applied to European languages, it will be concluded that Thai is a straightforward example of "adjectival-verb languages" (Schachter 1985 : 18), which do not distinguish between verbs and adjectives. Dixon (2004), however, throws doubt on this fairly standard assumption by saying :

> The modern discipline of linguistics has been centred on the study of European languages, and is generally undertaken by speakers of

> European languages. There has, as a consequence, arisen the idea that if a language has an adjective class, then it should be similar to the adjective class in European languages . . . .
>
> This has undoubtedly played a role in the failure to recognize an adjective class for languages in which adjectives show a rather different profile . . . . (Dixon 2004 : 13)

In this paper, I will make a detailed inquiry into the distribution of state-denoting predicates in Thai such as *rúu* 'know,' *maw* 'drunk,' and *sŭay* 'beautiful,' and draw the conclusion that Thai has the category of adjective. The analysis will reveal that the state-denoting predicates in Thai can be divided into two lexical classes, verb and adjective. Moreover, state-denoting verbs are subcategorized into inherently stative and inchoative stative verbs.

2. Similarities in Syntactic Behavior between Verbs and Adjectives

Thai does not show any morphological change demanded by tense, aspect, gender or any other grammatical agreement, as illustrated in (1) (Iwasaki & Ingkaphirom 2005, among others).

(1) naroŋ kin sômtam túk-wan mûawaan kɔ̂ɔ kin
Narong eat somtam everyday yesterday too eat
'Narong eats somtam everyday and yesterday he ate it, too.'

The issue of whether Thai has "adjectives" is rooted in the similarity of the syntactic behavior of words such as *thamŋaan* 'work' and *sŭay* 'beautiful' in both predicative and modificational uses.

(2) a. thəə thamŋaan yúu
3 sg(f) work many
'She works a lot.'

b. fâay chɔ̂ɔp khon (thîi) thamŋaan yúu
Faay like person (REL) work many
'Faay likes a person who works a lot.'

(3) a. thəə sŭay mâak
3 sg(f) beautiful very
'She is beautiful.'

b. fâay chɔ̂ɔp {khon/khon thîi} sŭay mâak
Faay like person/person REL beautiful very
'Faay likes {a very beautiful person/a person who is very beautiful}.'

As mentioned by Iwasaki & Ingkaphirom (2005), Thai does not require a copula to form the predicative adjective construction as in (3 a). It is often observed that Thai "adjectives" such as *sŭay* 'beautiful' and "verbs" such as *thamŋaan* 'work' behave in the same way in major syntactic environments. Prasithrathsint (2000) argues that noun phrases like (3 b) which appear to involve an "attributive adjective" should be analyzed as NPs involving a verb in which the relativizer *thîi* is omitted. She thus maintains that Thai is "an adjectival-verb language" in the sense of Schachter (1985) because there is no feasible syntactic distinction between the two categories.

According to Schachter (1985), adjectives are not a universal category for all languages in contrast to nouns and verbs, which are shared by all human languages. The languages which do not have "adjectives" will be classified into "adjectival-noun languages" and "adjectival-verb languages." The languages which belong to the former type use nouns to describe

states or properties which are usually described by “adjectives” in other languages, while the languages of the latter type employ verbs to describe adjectival meanings. Mandarin Chinese is given as a typical example of adjectival-verb languages. Dixon (2004), however, criticizes Schachter's analysis as lacking insight (p. 12) and points out that the criteria for recognizing “adjectives” can be found by close scrutiny, even though the “adjectives” in the so-called “adjectival-noun languages” and “adjectival-verb languages” behave quite similarly to nouns or verbs. I will discuss differences between adjectives and verbs in Thai, supporting the statement made by Baker (2003) and Dixon (2004) that all languages have the category “adjective.”

3. Two Categories for Denoting States

3. 1 Verbs Describing States : Inherently and Inchoative Stative Verbs

Languages with “closed adjective classes” (Schachter 1985 : 18), namely, languages which have a very limited number of adjectives, use verbs to express states which are commonly expressed by adjectives in other languages. Using verbs to describe states is not an uncommon phenomenon.

Thai also employs verbs to signify states which are described by adjectives in English or other languages. However, since Thai does not have any morphological change, denoting states by verbs per se leads to the three-way ambiguity of Thai change-of-state verbs, depending on context : (i) causative change of state, (ii) change of state (inchoative), and (iii) resultant state, as in (6) (Thepkanjana 2000 : 268)

(6) a. sudaa pə̀ət platuu (causative)
Suda open gate

'Suda opened the gate.'

b. pratuu pə̀ət (inchoative or stative)
gate open
'The gate opened/was open.'

Some Thai causative change-of-state verbs can thus denote the state of the object entity by being used as intransitive verbs. The function of these verbs cannot be identified by their forms alone, but can be identified only by the way they are used in context. For instance, if *pə̀ət* 'open/be open' appears in a sentence like *tɔɔn-níi* '*now*' *pratuu* '*the gate*' *pə̀ət* '*open/be open*,' *pə̀ət* holds a stative interpretation as in *The gate is open now*.

Thai encompasses two types of "stative verbs": (i) verbs like those in (7) which describe simple states without an additional inchoative meaning, and (ii) verbs like those in (8) which may indicate either state-change or resultant state (inchoative/stative alternation in Thepkanjana's terminology). Stative reading verbs which alternate with causative verbs like (6 b) are classified into (ii)-type, since both of the verbs like (6 b) and (8) are intransitive involving state-change and resultant state. The former type of "stative verbs" includes both intransitive and transitive verb though, the example of only the transitive type is illustrated now. The intransitive type will be discussed in section 3.2.

(7) a. fâay rúu khwaam-ciŋ
Faay know truth
'Faay knows the truth. (NOT 'got to know the truth.')'

b. naroŋ chɯ̂a phanrayaa khɔ̌ŋ khăw
Narong believe wife POS 3 sg
'Narong believes his wife. (NOT 'came to believe his wife.')'

(8) a. sǎnti nùay
Santi tired
'Santi got tired./Santi is tired.'

b. dɛɛŋ maw
Deng drunk
'Deng got drunk./Deng is drunk.'

The "stative verbs" in (7) cannot denote a state-change, like the change from the *not knowing the truth*-state to the *knowing the truth*-state, while the verbs in (8) allow either the state-change reading or the state-denoting reading according to context.(1) The difference between these two types of stative verbs may be due to the nature of the states. The former usually indicates a rather constant state, which does not involve any temporal boundary as is pointed out by Kageyama (1996) with respect to the English stative verb *know*, while the latter denotes a temporary or unsustainable state. In other words, the states represented by the stative verbs in (7) can be identified with "individual-level" states, and those in (8) with "stage-level" states in the sense of Carlson (1977). The individual/stage distinction between the two groups of stative verbs can be confirmed by the compatibility or incompatibility with punctual time adverbials, as shown below.

(9) a.*fâay rúu khwaam-ciŋ nay weelaa sìp-èt mooŋ
Faay know truth in time eleven o'clock
'Faay knew the truth at 11 o'clock.'

b. sǎnti nùai nay weelaa sìp-èt mooŋ
Santi tired in time eleven o'clock
'Santi was tired at 11 o'clock.'

Concerning the eventivity of predicates, Kageyama (2006) argues that stage-level states involve an "Event argument" [E-argument], in contrast

to individual-level states, which lack one (p. 97), by suggesting that "only sentences of event description have an E-argument; stative sentences of property description do not have one" (p. 96). Following Kageyama's proposal, I assume that Thai stative verbs in (7) do not have an E-argument, whereas those in (8) have one. According to their distinctiveness, I will classify Thai state-denoting verbs into two types as follows. Since such verbs as *maw* 'get drunk/be drunk,' which allow inchoative/stative alternation, can behave like adjectives depending on the environment, they will be referred to as INCHOATIVE STATIVE VERBS. Verbs like *rúu* 'know,' on the other hand, denote only states and thus are called as INHERENTLY STATIVE VERBS. The state-denoting predicates which belong to neither of those two types of verbs, I claim, constitute a distinct lexical category of adjectives. In sum, the Thai state-denoting predicates are classified as follows: (i) INHERENTLY STATIVE VERBS, (ii) INCHOATIVE STATIVE VERBS, and (iii) ADJECTIVES.

3. 2 The LCS and AS of Thai State-Denoting Predicates

Despite his claim that some languages do not have "adjectives" as a lexical category, Schachter (1985) acknowledges that the "verbs" in adjectival-verb languages that would be classified as "adjectives" in other languages "have at least one distinctive property not shared by (other) verbs," even though their behavior is almost the same as verbs, especially as stative verbs (p. 19). Thai "adjectives" also display a peculiarity as the acceptabilities in (10) illustrates.

(10) a. fâay {pen khon phûut yúu /phûut yúu}
Faay COP person speak many /speak many
'Faay {is a person who speaks a lot/speaks a lot}.'

b. fâay {pen khon rúu khwaam-ciŋ /rúu khwaam-ciŋ}
Faay COP person know truth /know truth
'Faay {is a person who knows the truth/ knows the truth}.'

c. fâay {pen khon maw bɔ̀y /maw bɔ̀y}
Faay COP person drunk often /drunk often
'Faay {is a person who often gets drunk/often gets drunk}.'

d. fâay {pen khon chalàat mâak /??? chalàat mâak}
Faay COP person clever very / clever very
'Faay {is a very clever person/is very clever}.'

Each of the four types of predicates signifies the characteristic of the subject. Although it is generally said that the attributive use is not sensitive to the categorial distinction, many Thai speakers tend not to accept the predicative use of *chalàat* in (10 d), whose subject is a proper noun,(2) and they instead recommend the copula sentence with the attributive use of *chalàat*. Thai copula sentences take only nominal complements to describe the characteristic, quality, and tendency of the subject (cf. Dixon 2004). On the other hand, by considering the difference in acceptability in (10 d), we can assume that the predicates in Thai copular sentences which describe the characteristic of the subject are required to be related with eventivity.

Inherently stative verbs such as *rúu* 'know' do not hold an E-argument, but those verbs are associated with eventivity in Lexical Conceptual Structure (LCS), which makes difference from adjectives. The *knowing*-state, for instance, implies that the *not knowing*-state must exist before the *knowing*-state is achieved. In other words, the existence of states denoted by inherently stative verbs necessarily implies that it arises as a result of the state-change, which is responsible for eventivity. In (11), I sketch out the representations and the Argument Structure (AS)

of the predicative sentences in (10), adapted from Kageyama's (2006 : 97–98) proposal of an event argument.

(11) a. LCS : [EVENT x ACT]
AS : (Ev (x 〈 〉)) (Cf. 10 a)

b. LCS : [(IMP [EVENT x CAUSE]) [STATE x BE AT-*STATE*-of-y]]
AS : (St (x 〈y〉)) (Cf. 10 b)

c. LCS : [EVENT BECOME [STATE y BE AT-*STATE*]]
AS : (Ev (〈y〉)) (Cf. 10 c)

d. LCS : [STATE y BE AT-*STATE*]
AS : (St (〈y〉)) (Cf. 10 d)

According to Kageyama's (2006 : 97) theory, the *EVENT* in the LCS representations in (11 a, c) is mapped to AS as the E-argument. However, the predicates in (10 b, d) do not encompass the E-argument, but hold a State-argument (S-argument) as is shown in (11 b, d). A *S(tate)-argument* is proposed by Parsons (1990) for English sentences with adjectives and locative and state verbs. The reason why the inherent stative verbs such as the one in (10 b) have an S-argument even though it contains the *EVENT*, which indicates an eventivity in the LCS and which differs from the E-argument, is that those verbs are lexically specified that the causing event is inherently suppressed. The implication operator *IMP*, which is shown in (11 b), forces a causative or an inchoative event into an implication of the word. Because of this operation, the causing event is only implicated, but not entailed in the verbs. Since the eventivity is suppressed by the *IMP*, the verb does not contain an E-argument, but instead encompass an S-argument. The inchoative stative verb in (10 c) can alternate an E-argument (in 11 c) with an S-argument, which is illustrated in (12).

Now, the states denoted by Thai adjectives do not presuppose the

opposite states. For instance, *Faay* is not required to have the *being not. clever*-state as the presupposition to hold the *being clever*-state in (10 d). Thus, adjectives have different temporal structures from stative verbs. The latter do, but the former do not involve an onset point indicating the time when the state-change occurs. This phase of the state-change involves eventivity, represented as the *EVENT* in the LCS. The following shows the lexical entries for each type of the Thai state-denoting predicates, in which the intransitive inherently stative verb, *yùu* 'be, exist,' is also illustrated.

(12) a. TRANSITIVE STATIVE VERB : e.g. *x rúu y* 'x know y'
Lexical category : Verb
LCS : [(IMP [EVENT x CAUSE]) [STATE x BE AT-*knowing* y]]
AS : (St (x 〈y〉))
INTRANSITIVE STATIVE VERB : e.g. *y yùu thîi bâan* 'y be at house'
Lexical category : Verb
LCS : [(IMP [EVENT BECOME]) [STATE y BE AT-*house*]]
AS : (St (〈y〉))

b. INCHOATIVE STATIVE VERB : e.g. y maw 'y {get/be} drunk'
Lexical category : Verb
(i) State-change reading
LCS : [EVENT BECOME [STATE y BE AT-*being drunk*]]
AS : (Ev (〈y〉))
(ii) Stative reading
LCS : [(IMP [EVENT BECOME]) [STATE y BE AT-*being drunk*]]
AS : (St (〈y〉))

c. ADJECTIVE : e.g. *y sŭay* 'y is beautiful'
Lexical category : Adjective
LCS : [STATE y BE AT-*being beautiful*]

AS : (St (〈y〉))

Note that the eventivity part (*EVENT BECOME* which is enclosed in parentheses (12 a, b (ii))) in the LCS is suppressed when the verb have a stative reading in Thai. Without any argument, I stipulate that the suppression is induced by the implication operator (*IMP*). I assume that the basic meaning of inchoative stative verbs is (i) the state-change reading, which is turned to (ii) the stative reading by the rule of "stativalization". Stativalization involves a function where the *IMP* operator turns a causing event into a background eventivity. The inherently stative verb, however, intrinsically suppresses the causing event, as it does not alternate with the state-change reading. I assume that when the causing event is inherently suppressed, the verb takes on an S-argument.

4. Differences between Adjectives and Inchoative Stative Verbs

4. 1 Progressive Construction

Although Prasithrathsint (2000) argues that adjectives and verbs in Thai behave virtually the same in syntax, the two categories are indeed differentiated in some syntactic environments. One diagnosis is the progressive form, which is compatible with verbs, as in (13 a, b), but not with adjectives, as shown by the ungrammaticality of (13 c).

(13) a. naroŋ {kamlaŋ phûut yùu /phûut lέɛw}
Narong PROG speak IMPERF /speak ASP. PAST
'Narong is speaking.'

b. naroŋ {kamlaŋ maw yùu /maw lέɛw}
Narong PROG drunk IMPERF /drunk ASP. PAST
'Narong is (being) drunk/got drunk.'

c. narooŋ {*kamlaŋ chalàat yùu /chalàat lέεw}
Narong PROG clever IMPERF /clever ASP. PAST
'Narong is (being) clever/became clever.'

Progressive sentences depict ongoing events which have begun and still continue at the moment of utterance. The imperfective *yùu* is supposedly not limited to words which do not encompass an E-argument. Since Thai adjectives, which denote temporally unbounded states, do not have an E-argument, they are blocked from entering progressive sentences. The inchoative stative verbs in the progressive, however, are completely acceptable, since they hold an E-argument which is related to the temporal structure.

4. 2 Imperative Construction

As evidence to argue that "adjectives" are verbs, Prasithrathsint (2000) provides the imperative with the auxiliary verb *coŋ* in the literary style.

(14) a. coŋ phûut mɨ̂a mii khon thăam
IMPR speak when have person ask
'Speak when somebody asks you.'

b. coŋ dii thalɔ̀ɔt-pay
IMPR good forever
'Be good forever.' (Prasithrathsint 2000 : 262)

The following sentences of colloquial style, however, show a semantic difference between the sentences with an activity verb, an inchoative stative verb, and an adjective, all of which are in the same syntactic slot.

(15) a. phûut sì
speak FINAL PTCL. IMPR/FINAL PTCL. EMP
'Speak!'/'(I will) speak, indeed.'

b. maw sì
drunk FINAL PTCL. IMPR/FINAL PTCL. EMP
'Get drunk!'/'(I am) drunk, indeed.'

c. dii sì
good FINAL PTCL. EMP/*FINAL PTCL. IMPR
'Good, indeed.' (NOT 'Be good.')

Note that *dii sì* in (15 c) cannot be construed as the imperative of "Be good." The final particle *sì* is used in two ways : one for the imperative sentence, and the other as an emphatic affirmative answer to a question such as *Do you speak?, Are you drunk?,* and *Is it good?.*

The particle *sà,* whose usage is quite similar to *sì,* exhibits a more obvious semantic difference between activity verbs, inchoative stative verbs, and adjectives. If *sà* is employed with activity verbs, it yields only an imperative reading : for example, *phûut sà* means only 'Speak!' but not '(I will) speak, indeed.' On the other hand, if the same particle is used with adjectives as in *dii 'good' sà,* it emphasizes adjectives. Since inchoative stative verbs can denote either state-change or state, those with *sà* can have two interpretations. For instance, *maw* 'get drunk/be drunk' *sà* can be construed as either 'Get drunk!' or '(I am) drunk, indeed' depending on context.

The semantic distributions of imperative markers *coŋ, sì,* and *sà* can be accounted for as follows : (i) *coŋ* can be related with either an E-argument or an S-argument of a predicate, assuming that it involves both an E-argument and an S-argument element ; (ii) *sì* selects either an imperative or an emphatic marker depending on a predicate : The former links only to an E-argument, whereas the latter can connect with either an E-argument or an S-argument ; (iii) *sà,* which encompasses both an imperative and an emphatic marker, picks the former function for an E-

argument and the latter function for an S-argument.

4. 3 Resultative Construction

The difference between inchoative stative verbs and adjectives can also be observed in the resultative construction. In Thai, the serial verb construction (SVC) is employed to describe the cause-effect event (Takahashi 2007, Thepkanjana & Uehara To appear). Only verbs can enter the second verb slot of the SVC, and adjectives appear in the superficially similar construction to the SVC, which is the ellipsis of the CAUSE marker, *hây* (Matsui 2007).

(16) a. naroŋ yiŋ sŭa taay
Narong shoot tiger die
'Narong shot the tiger dead' (The tiger actually died.)

b. naroŋ sák phâa saʔàat
Narong wash clothes clean
'Narong washed the clothes clean.'

(17) a. naroŋ yiŋ sŭa hây taay
Narong shoot tiger CAUSE die
'Narong shot the tiger to make it dead (but it may not be dead.)'

b. naroŋ sák phâa hây saʔàat
Narong wash clothes CAUSE clean
'Narong washed the clothes clean.'

The adjectives in (16 b) and (17 b) denote the final state of the object entities, whereas the inchoative stative verb in (17 a) is ambiguous with respect to whether the result state is achieved. Since *taay* 'die' is a verb, it can serve as the second verb of the SVC in which it denotes the state-change of the object entity, but not in the similar construction with *hây* in

which the verb following *hây* signifies the aimed state but does not always entail the accomplishment of the state which is caused by the event denoted by the verb.

The ambiguity of the interpretation in (17 a) is due to the LCS of the inchoative stative verb. Since inchoative stative verbs can suppress the causing event in the LCS to have a stative reading, the two interpretations are possible in (17 a). The semantic distinctions in the same syntactic form with two kinds of predicates shown in this section indicate that adjectives and verbs in Thai are two distinct lexical categories.

5. Serial Verb Construction and Manner Adverb Construction

A crucial difference between verbs and adjectives lies in their usage as adverbs. In many languages adjectives can function as manner adverbs either with a plain form or with a derivational form (Dixon 2004, Schachter 1985). Baker (2003) suggests that adverbs such as *quickly* can be treated as adjectives even though they include the suffix *-ly*. Although we do not discuss whether adjective-derived adverbs are to be categorized as adjectives, these two categories are closely related as shown in the English sentences below.

(18) a. Juan did a *beautiful* dance. / Juan danced *beautifully*.
b. Ariel is a *poor* speaker. / Ariel speaks *poorly*.

Thai adjectives are used as adverbs in the following ways : (i) adjectives used as adverbs with plain form, (ii) adjectives with the prefix *yàaŋ* (‘style’), (iii) nominalized adjectives (with the nominalization prefix *khwaam*) with the preposition *dûay* ‘with’ (cf. Iwasaki & Ingkaphirom 2005, Tanaka 2004).

(19) a. fâay phûut {suphâap /yàaŋ suphâap}
Faaay speak polite /PFX polite
'Faay speaks {polite/politely}.'

b. fâay phûut dûay khwaam suphâap
Faay speak with PFX polite
'Faay speaks with politeness.'

The difference between manner adverbs with "bare adjectives" and those with "*yàaŋ*+adjectives" is this: When manner adverbs are described by bare adjectives, they denote the characteristics or tendency of the subject entity, while the adverbs with *yàaŋ* indicate the manner of the action.

Reduplicated adjectives can also function as adjectives in Thai. As Enfield (2004) points out in his analysis of Lao, reduplication is used as an emphatic expression in Thai as well.

(20) fâay chɔ̂ɔp khon sŭay-sŭay
Faay like person beautiful-RDP
'Faay likes a very beautiful person.'

The reduplication adjectives can also express an adverbial meaning.

(21) naroŋ tênram sŭay-sŭay
Narong dance beautiful-RDP
'Narong dances beautifully.'

Inchoative stative verbs are also employed in adverbials.

(22) a. sănti khàp rót {yàaŋ maw /dûay khwaam-maw}
Santi drive car PFX drunk /with NOM. PFX drunk
'Santi drove a car {drunkenly / with drunkness}.'

b. dɛɛŋ tham-ŋaan { yàaŋ nɯ̀ay /dûay khwaam-nɯ̀ay}
Deng work PFX tired /with NOM. PFX tired
'Deng worked {tiredly / with tiredness}.'

It seems that the semantics of the *yàaŋ* adverbial is similar to English

manner adverbs. In her analysis of secondary predication in English, Rothstein (2004) explains the distinction between the depictive predicate *drunk* and the manner adverb *drunkenly* as in (23).

(23) a. John drove the car drunk.

b. John drove the car drunkenly. (Rothstein 2004 : 64)

The depictive sentence (23 a) entails that John was drunk, whereas the sentence with a manner adverb in (23 b) does not entail such a state but merely expresses how John drove the car. The acceptabilities of (23 a) and (24 b) thus differ.

(24) John drove the car {drunkenly/*drunk}, although he was sober.

(Rothstein 2004 : 64)

The *yàaŋ* adverbial with inchoative stative verbs such as (22 a) and (22 b) is a manner adverb which denotes the speaker's subjective judgment. Because of this characteristic, cooccurrence of the *yàaŋ* adverbial with stative verbs such as *nɔɔn* 'sleep' is generally avoided.

(25) fâay {tham-ŋaan/???nɔɔn } yàaŋ maw

Faay work/sleep PFX drunk

'Faay {worked/slept} drunkenly.'

When the actuality of the state is required to be expressed, the *dûay khwaam* adverbial as in (22) is to be used.

Although an inchoative stative verb can be used as a manner adverbial with the prefix *yàaŋ*, it cannot be used as an adverb in the way that bare adjectives are used as manner adverbs.

(26) #dɛɛŋ tham-ŋaan nẁay

Deng work tired

'Deng worked and got tired.' (NOT 'Deng worked tired.')

Interestingly, if an inchoative stative verb is reduplicated, the manner reading can be marginally allowed.

(27) dɛɛŋ tham-ŋaan nẁay-nẁay
Deng work tired-RDP
'Deng worked and got very tired.'/'Deng worked tired.'

The reason why the inchoative stative verb by itself cannot be interpreted as a manner adverb in (26) is that it is forced to constitute the SVC with the former verb because of the lexical category of the inchoative stative verb. The ambiguity of (27) suggests that reduplication may emphasize the stative reading in inchoative stative verbs. Inherently stative verbs also cannot function as manner adverbs by themselves as (28) shows.

(28) *fâay phûut rúu (fâay phûut mŭan rúu)
Faaay speak know (Faay speak same know)
'Faay speaks knowingly (Faay speaks like she knows).'

The adverb formed by reduplicated adjectives and inchoative stative verbs are considered to be equivalent to the English depictives. Enfield (2004) also regards adjectives in constructions like (29) as depictive predicates in Lao.(3)

(29) man 2 kin 3 siin 4 man 4 dip 2
3 SG eat meat DEM. NONPROX raw
'He ate that meat raw.' (Enfield 2004 : 338)

Since adjectives and reduplicated inchoative stative verbs do not form a SVC with verbs, they can function as depictives to denote states. Note that reduplicated forms are preferred to describe the depictive state even for adjectives since the post-nominal adjective is interpreted as an attributive usage without reduplication. The following is an example of an object-oriented depictive.

(30) fâay kin plaa dìp-dìp (# fâay kin plaa dìp)
Faay eat fish raw-RDP Faay eat fish raw
'Faay ate the fish raw.' (Interpreted only as 'Faay eat the raw fish.')

The subject-oriented depictive predicate can also be described by a reduplicated form. If the predicate is an inchoative stative verb, the first verb in a SVC provides a similar meaning.

(31) naroŋ { tham-ŋaan ŋîap-ŋîap /ŋîap tham-ŋaan}
Narong work quiet-RDP /quiet work
'Narong {worked quiet/became quiet and worked}.'

However, it does not seem proper to refer to the SVC in the latter usage as a depictive construction, since the sentence is construed as sequential events.

Although both adjectives and inchoative stative verbs can be used as manner adverbials with the prefix *yàaŋ*, a clear difference between them can be observed. The bare or reduplicated adjectives can function as adverbs, whereas inchoative stative verbs per se cannot unless they are reduplicated, since inchoative stative verbs are interpreted as the second verb in a SVC.

6. Conclusion

In this paper, I have argued that Thai bears three types of state-denoting predicates: STATIVE VERBS, INCHOATIVE STATIVE VERBS, and ADJECTIVES. The lexical categories of state-denoting predicates in Thai can be distinguished as to whether eventivity, which is state-change in this case, is implied by the words or not. First, Thai stative verbs encompass an S-argument since the eventivity is inherently suppressed, and thus eventivity, which connotates an onset point, is only implied. States denoted by those verbs are usually persistent and qualified for individual-level states. Second, inchoative stative verbs can alternate state-change and stative interpretations. Because they have an E-argument, the states

are related to the temporal structure, and thus, are stage-level. However, an S-argument is arisen when the interpretation is alternated with stative one because of the suppression of the inchoative event. Third, states denoted by Thai adjectives intrinsically lack eventivity, and thus hold an S-argument. This type of states is temporally unbounded, in contrast with states denoted by verbs.

The categorial distinction of state-denoting predicates in Thai presented in this paper can account for their syntactic distributions and semantic differences. The significant difference can be seen in secondary predication construction, especially in the depictive construction. The difference between the manner adverb construction and the serial verb construction cannot be clarified unless the categorial distinction is made. This study has revealed the essential semantic difference of the state-denoting predicates, which is rigidly connected with the syntactic configuration as well.

Notes

Abbreviation: ASP=aspect marker; COP=copula; EMP=emphatic; IMPR=imperative; GRD=gerundive; IMPERF=imperfective; REL=relativizer; PAST=past tense; PFX=prefix; POS=possessive; PRES=present tense; PROG=progressive; PTCL=particle; RDP=reduplication

(1) The ambiguity between the inchoative and stative reading in (8) can be clarified by adding *lέ́ɛw* 'PAST' and *yùu* 'IMPERF'; if *lέ́ɛw* is added, the verb is construed as inchoative, but if *yùu* is added, it is read as stative.

(2) Tanaka (2004: 110) notes that Thai predicative adjectives may give ambiguity since the attributive adjective is located after the noun in Thai. The adjective can be construed either as a nominal modifier or a predicate, depending on the listener's interpretation of the sequence as a phrase or a sentence.

(3) Lao is the language which is very similar to Thai. Enfield (2004) labels the word such as *dip* 'raw' as adjectives, although he concludes that the adjective in Lao is a subclass of the stative verb.

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